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# COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA



## OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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### **NUMBER TWENTY EIGHT (2010)**

#### **The Commonwealth's Gang and Violent Crime Executive Committee**

##### **Importance of the Issue**

Information from law enforcement agencies indicates that gang activity and crime, once a problem reserved for large cities, has spread outward as gang members migrate from urban areas to suburban and rural communities, threatening the safety of Virginians everywhere. The Virginia Fusion Center reports the presence of criminal street gangs throughout Northern Virginia, the Greater Richmond Area, Western Virginia, Hampton Roads and in far Southwest Virginia. Offshoots of National gangs such as the Bloods, Crips and Gangster Disciples are active throughout the Commonwealth. In order to make Virginia a safer place to raise a family and own or operate a business, it is essential that federal, state and local governments work together to address and reduce gangs and gang-related violence in the Commonwealth.

By combating gangs we impact other criminal activities including drug distribution, illegal firearms possession, assault, murder and a host of other crimes. Strong anti-gang education and prevention efforts designed to reduce gang membership; and programs for individuals who want to renounce gang life, are all essential to addressing criminal street gangs and gang related violence.

Accordingly, the Commonwealth must work collaboratively along with local and federal partners, businesses, as well as community and faith-based organizations, in establishing best practices for combating gangs and reducing gang-related crime.

### **The Commonwealth's Gang and Violent Crime Executive Committee**

Many localities have taken steps to address the gang problem within their communities; however, additional resources are needed to aid local governments in their fight against gangs and gang related violence.

By virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor, under Article V of the Constitution of Virginia and under the laws of the Commonwealth, including but not limited to Section 2.2-134 of the *Code of Virginia*, and subject always to my continuing and ultimate authority and responsibility to act in such matters, I hereby establish the Commonwealth's Gang and Violent Crime Executive Committee

The Commonwealth's Gang and Violent Crime Executive Committee (the "Committee") shall be chaired by the Secretary of Public Safety or her designee. The Committee shall be comprised of representatives of the following agencies and organizations:

- The Commonwealth's Attorneys' Services Council
- The Department of Correctional Education
- The Department of Corrections – Institutions
- The Department of Corrections – Community Corrections
- The Department of Criminal Justice Services
- The Department of Education
- The Department of Health
- The Department of Housing and Community Development
- The Department of Juvenile Justice
- The Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services
- The Department of Social Services
- The Department of State Police
- The Governor's Office for Substance Abuse Prevention
- The Office of the Attorney General
- The Department of Alcohol Beverage Control
- The Office of the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court
- The Governor's Prisoner Re-Entry Coordinator
- The Virginia Regional Jail Association
- The Virginia Sheriff's Association
- The Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police
- The Virginia Association of Commonwealth's Attorneys

The Governor may appoint additional members as appropriate. Further, the Secretary of Public Safety may invite additional participation as needed. All Executive

Branch agencies of the Commonwealth, upon request, shall participate in activities of the Committee. Support staff will be provided by the Office of the Secretary of Public Safety, the Department of State Police and other agencies as the Secretary of Public Safety may designate.

The Executive Committee shall:

- Develop and expand partnerships within all levels of federal, state and local government to best utilize resources to impact gang crime in the Commonwealth;
- Work with the Prisoner Re-entry Coordinator and the Virginia Prisoner and Juvenile Offender Re-entry Council in establishing strategies for successful reentry of gang members;
- Engage local agencies, community based social service providers, community organizations, faith-based organizations, as well as other stakeholders, in promoting evidence based programs like Richmond's successful and nationally recognized Gang Reduction and Intervention Program (GRIP);
- Coordinate the dissemination of gang-awareness information to citizens of the Commonwealth in order to increase their involvement in making local communities safe and fostering local opportunities for youth;
- Expand discussions and anti-gang planning to include trends and patterns of related violent crime in the Commonwealth;
- Provide the Governor, by December 1, 2011, a report that includes an analysis of state agencies anti-gang efforts, and the status of the State Police Anti-Gang Task Forces. The report should also include recommendations regarding strategic advancement of gang investigations and the development of gang intelligence as well as recommendations for educational, prevention, and re-entry strategies. Finally, the report should include best practices and anti-gang initiatives throughout the Commonwealth;

The Secretary of Public Safety, working with the Committee, shall develop a long-term strategic plan for reducing gang activity and gang violence in the Commonwealth. The plan shall identify methods of improving communication; a strategy for sharing of information; and ways of strengthening collaboration between state and local agencies. Such a plan shall be submitted to the Governor no later than December 1, 2011.

The Committee shall submit to the Governor its findings and recommendations on matters potentially impacting the development of the Executive Budget no later than September 15, 2011. The Committee shall submit a final report of its activities, findings and recommendations no later than October 1, 2011. Should the Committee be extended beyond a year, this pattern of reporting shall continue for the duration of the Committee.

Necessary funding to support the Executive Committee and its staff shall be provided from federal funds, private contributions, and state funds appropriated for the same purposes as the Committee, as authorized by Section 2.2-135 of the *Code of Virginia*, as well as any other private sources of funding that may be identified. Estimated direct costs

for this Executive Committee are \$5,000.00 per year. An estimated 200 hours of staff time will be required to support the work of the Executive Committee.

**Effective Date of the Executive Order**

This Executive Order shall be effective upon its signing and shall remain in full force and effect for one year from its signing, unless amended or rescinded by further Executive Order.

Given under my hand and under the Seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia this 16<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2010.

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Robert F. McDonnell, Governor

Attest:

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Secretary of the Commonwealth